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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of:

Ford, et al.

Serial No.: 10/612,502

Filed: July 3, 2003

For: **PRODUCT PACKAGING
SYSTEM**

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Examiner: Hemant Desai

Art Unit: 3721

AMENDMENT

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

In response to the Office Action of April 19, 2004, please amend the above-identified application as follows:

Amendments to the Claims are reflected in the listing of claims which begins on page 2 of this paper.

Remarks/Arguments begin on page 9 of this paper.

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In contrast, there is no teaching or suggestion in *Petry, et al.* about there being tapering between the plates 5, 6 (which the Office Action alleges to be funnels) in the manner that is recited in amended Claim 1. It is respectfully submitted that Claim 1 is neither taught nor suggested by the known prior art, such that Claim 1 is in condition for immediate allowance. Likewise, it is respectfully submitted that dependent Claims 3-11 and new dependent Claims 30-32 are allowable because of their dependence from allowable Claim 1, and because the dependent claims further patentably distinguish the present invention. For example, the Examiner's attention is directed to new dependent Claims 30-32.

The amendment to Claim 10 has been made for purposes of clarification and not to narrow the claim.

Conclusion

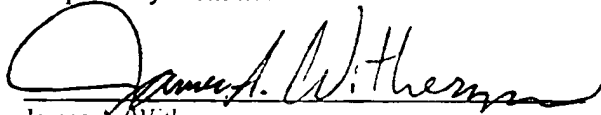
In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for immediate allowance, and such action is solicited. If for some reason the Examiner deems that the present application is not in condition for immediate allowance, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone the undersigned at 704-331-4904 in an effort to expedite prosecution.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees that may be required for the timely consideration of this Amendment under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 09-0528.

Date

1/5/05

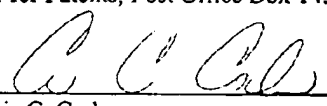
Respectfully submitted


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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope address to: Commissioner for Patents, Post Office Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450, on January 5, 2005.


Connie C. Carlson